

Limestone District School Board's Character Education Framework



Acknowledgements

*Thanks to the members of the District Character Education Committee and the Program Team.
In particular, thank you to the following individuals who created this document.*

Melissa Baker
Scott Baker
Carol Butler
Debra Cancian
Margaret Connelly
Laurel Cruise-Alkenbrack
Thomas Fielding
Karen Handley
Paul Hannah
Heather Highet
Kevin Hulton
Karen Jackson
Heather Lutes
Meri Macleod
Jacqueine Mallory
Norah Marsh
Talya McKenna
Trustee Barbara McLaren
Jenifer Muli
Anne Nahorny
Erin Pincivero
Shawn Quigley
Susan Saccary
Katherine Sampson
Jamie Schoular
Judy Tetlow

Published by
LDSB Program Team Publication
August, 2008.

Table Of Contents

Preface	1
1. Introduction	3
2. Identification	5
3. Engagement.....	11
4. Implementation	17
5. Evaluation	33
6. References	41





Preface

The Limestone District School Board's mission is to help our students develop into successful lifelong learners who understand the importance of community, civic pride, responsibility and ethical decision making.

To complement the work already being done in boards such as Limestone, the Ontario Ministry of Education released the document *Finding Common Ground: Character Development in Ontario Schools, K-12* (2006). This document mandates every school board in Ontario to develop a district-wide Character Education plan to support student success. In 2008, the Ontario Ministry of Education released an updated *On Common Ground* to support student success and the role that Character Education plays within it. In that document, Character Education is defined as:

The deliberate effort to nurture the universal attributes upon which communities agree. These attributes reflect a forged consensus on the beliefs and values of families and communities.....It is critical that these attributes be identified through a school board process of family and community consultation. Through this process, communities find common ground on the qualities which schools should foster through systematic and intentional practices (page 4).

This definition is reflected in the work that staff and students already do in our schools. The Ministry of Education has further mandated that every district identify key attributes for each school to use as an educational focus for students. Recognizing that many of our schools have already developed well-defined Character Education programs, the District Committee decided to focus on supporting Character Education development for individual schools. This resulting document is intended to highlight the range of applicable attributes and to support schools in identifying and nurturing the key attributes that best serve their unique cultures.

For 2008-2009, every school must clearly articulate its Character Education plan and the selected attributes that will support this work. Most schools have already included the importance of Character Education and its relationship to the creation of a positive learning environment within their school improvement plans. We have always believed in educating the whole child and have understood that high academic achievement does not occur in isolation. Schools frequently use Character Education as a strategy within their school improvement plans to facilitate creating an environment of high academic achievement.

Character Education can be integrated into schools in a variety of ways to facilitate community building, spirit, success and achievement. The methodology that each individual school develops will be unique to the needs of the school community; the process is consistent and designed to ensure that Character Education is a vibrant part of the school improvement process and used as a strategy that supports success for all.

This document is designed to be used as a practical guide for our schools to support character development work and assist in embedding character education within school goal plans. The identified stages of this journey are: Identification, Engagement, Implementation and Evaluation. Identification focuses on establishing a plan of action, Engagement on zeroing in on the unique needs of individual school communities, Implementation on practical ideas for your school and classroom, and Evaluation on reviewing progress and developing further goals. Each section begins with a checklist that provides a useful guide as you work through this process at your school. Sample resources, practical ideas and relevant research ideas are included to help you on your journey.

Individual school communities are encouraged to share ideas with their colleagues, thereby continuing to develop this resource package as a family of schools.



1 Introduction

This document is organized into the following sections/steps to guide you in creating and implementing your Character Education action plan:

- ❖ **Identification**
- ❖ **Engagement**
- ❖ **Implementation**
- ❖ **Evaluation**

1. **Identification** focuses on establishing a plan of action,
2. **Engagement** facilitates zeroing in on the unique needs of individual school communities,
3. **Implementation** provides practical ideas for your school and classroom and
4. **Evaluation** guides you through reviewing your progress and developing further goals.

These four steps are essential for the development of a comprehensive and effective Character Education program, and it is important that all of these steps are fully covered in sequence in order to ensure the success of your individual school plan.

Each step/section includes a comprehensive checklist that is intended as a guide and provides a useful outline for your Character Education development program.

Further information is provided in each section to provide you with tools, examples, templates and ideas for you to utilize when developing your own unique Character Education plan.

Each school will need to develop a plan specific to the needs of its individual community. At the same time, consultation between schools will be important during this process to ensure that there is some continuity between secondary school plans and those of their corresponding feeder schools.

Key Steps for Successful Integration of Character Development

- Step # 1: IDENTIFICATION**
Step # 2: ENGAGEMENT
Step # 3: IMPLEMENTATION
Step # 4: EVALUATION

	IDENTIFICATION	ENGAGEMENT	IMPLEMENTATION	EVALUATION
STAFF	Establish the key leaders. Where are we? What resources do we have? (school, community, literature) What measurement tools will we use? (surveys, lates, absences, suspensions, good news reports, etc.)	Sharing of results Identify where we want to be as a school? (school improvement plan) Are we attempting to improve, maintain, or extend? What programs /ideas will we use? Identify common traits.	Curriculum connections Modelling Positive school environment School-wide programs (assemblies, etc.)	Review of measurement tools identified in first step Report to other school community members Recognition/celebration Where do we go from here?
STUDENTS	Establish the key leaders. Where are we? (surveys, class meetings, rating scales)	What is important to them? How do they see getting there? What are they willing to do? What does it look, feel and sound like?	Modelling (school and home) Positive school environment School-wide programs (assemblies, etc.)	Review and provide constructive feedback Recognition/celebration Where do we go from here?
COMMUNITY	Establish the key leaders. Where are we? (surveys, etc.)	As above	Modelling (school and home) Positive school environment School-wide programs (assemblies, etc.)	Review constructive feedback Recognition/celebration Where do we go from here?

IDENTIFICATION

STAFF

- We have identified in-school leaders.
- We are aware of our current situation vis à vis Character Education.
- We have gathered our resources together (e.g., personnel, print, web-based).
- We have identified what measurement tools we will use (e.g., surveys before and after implementation, number of lates/absences, number of suspensions, number of good news reports).
- We have identified what character traits are important to our school community.

STUDENTS

- We have invited our students to take part in this process.
- We have identified the leaders in our classrooms (e.g., student elections, character committed).
- We have a baseline of the current perceptions of our students (sample rubrics provided).
- Our students have identified what character traits are important to our school.

COMMUNITY

- We have invited our community to take part in this process.
- We have identified the leaders in our community (e.g., School Council, sub-committees).
- We have a baseline of the current perceptions of our community (e.g., parent survey).
- Our community has identified what character traits are important to it.



2 Identification

Character Education is not something else to add onto the plate of what we have to do in school. It is the plate.

~ Merle Schwartz

This section covers steps for establishing the focus of your plan of action for Character Education.

Initially, it is important to become familiar with the key principles of Character Education. More substantive information with regard to this topic can be found in the Ministry of Education document: *On Common Ground*. Familiarity with this background information will facilitate your analysis of your school climate in terms of the Character Education needs of your individual school.

It is critical to involve all stakeholders in the development of an action plan to ensure that all perspectives (staff, student, parents/guardians and community) are incorporated into the creation of your plan. The specific character traits that are important to your school community must be identified as a joint effort. (Sample attributes to work from are included in this section.)

Establishing leadership for your program is also important. Identifying and obtaining commitment from school personnel who will spearhead this project, establishing a student leadership group to work with them and including parental involvement are critical facets.

The Identification phase further involves gathering baseline data that can be used to compare your program results during the Evaluation phase. (Samples included in Evaluation section.)

Key Principles of Character Education

Character Education:

- ❖ Supports academic achievement.
- ❖ Encourages the growth and development of the whole student in all domains: cognitive, affective and behavioural.
- ❖ Supports behaviours for effective functioning as an individual learner and engaged citizen.
- ❖ Contributes to a safe, healthy and orderly school environment as a prerequisite for learning.
- ❖ Creates learning environments that are collaborative where teachers spend less time disciplining and more time doing what they do best, namely, teaching.
- ❖ Fosters high expectations for learning and behaviour that contribute to academic success by engaging students in their own learning.
- ❖ Transcends demographic factors including racial, ethno-cultural, linguistic, religious, gender-based, physical and intellectual.
- ❖ Finds common ground for Ontario's diverse population based on our shared values.
- ❖ Is a whole school effort with the expectation that all members of the staff will be committed to its effective implementation and will model, teach and expect demonstrations of the attributes in all school, classroom and extra-curricular activities.
- ❖ Engages students in the development process. The initiative will not be successful without the meaningful participation and involvement of students.
- ❖ Engages the community in sharing the responsibility for character development.
- ❖ Supports the unique needs of our communities.

Sample Attributes

Acceptance	Gratitude	Purity
Adaptability	Helpfulness	Purposefulness
Altruism	Honesty	Respect
Assertiveness	Hope	Responsibility
Charity	Humility	Self-discipline
Citizenship	Industry	Selflessness
Cleanliness	Initiative	Simplicity
Compassion	Integrity	Sincerity
Contemplation	Justice	Supportiveness
Cooperation	Love	Tact
Courage	Loyalty	Temperance
Courtesy	Mercy	Tenacity
Duty	Moderation	Tolerance
Empathy	Modesty	Trustworthiness
Fairness	Obedience	Unity
Faith	Optimism	Willpower
Flexibility	Patience	Wisdom
Forgiveness	Peacefulness	
Fortitude	Perseverance	
Friendliness	Prudence	
Generosity	Punctuality	





ENGAGEMENT

STAFF

- We have shared results of baseline data with all stakeholders (e.g., staff, students, community).
- We have determined whether or not our goal is to improve, maintain, or extend our current awareness/demonstration of Character Education.
- We have established Character Education as a key strategy within our School Improvement Plan.
- We have determined which resources we will use.
- We have agreed upon a common language.
- We have determined what our celebrations of success will look like (e.g., assemblies, awards).
- We have a plan for receiving feedback from all stakeholders.

STUDENTS

- Our students have determined what each character trait we have selected "Looks Like, Feels Like, and Sounds Like."
- Our students have had input into what our celebrations/procedures should look, sound, and feel like.
- Our students have committed their personal goals to paper and outlined what steps they will take to achieve them.

COMMUNITY

- Our community has had input into what our celebrations and procedures should look, sound, and feel like.
- We have invited community partnerships (e.g., local support of various initiatives).
- We have invited our community members to continue with our implementation at home and in the community (e.g., use of common language).



3 Engagement

People grow through experience if they meet life honestly and courageously. This is how character is built.

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

Engagement focuses on the development of your individual action plan based on data gathered during the Identification stage.

Having identified, as a community, what you would like to achieve, it is now important to determine how you will implement this plan.

Once again, it is important to stress that engaging all levels of the school community (staff, students and parents) is a critical element of this step: Refining definitions and meanings together will facilitate the development of clear outcomes.

- ❖ Creating a 'common language' as the core of your plan will prove invaluable for effective implementation.

Establishing how you will recognize, acknowledge and celebrate the work done by all involved will facilitate on-going engagement and commitment to your plan.

This section includes ideas for:

- ❖ School team planning and
- ❖ Information that delineates the difference between 'performance' and 'moral' character traits along with ideas for planning how to incorporate these concepts.

Engaging School Community Partners

School Team Planning This is a planning guide to explore next steps, identify needs and discuss visions.	
<p><i>Need to Know ...</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What information do I/we need/want? 2. What are our Board/family or school intentions for character development? 3. What are the Ministry expectations for character development as outlined in <i>Finding Common Ground</i>? 4. What am I/we reasonably able to commit to? 5. What is happening in our school already? 	<p><i>Action for Planning ...</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who needs to be involved? 2. What questions do we need to ask... of ourselves, our school, our students, our Board, our community? 3. Does our "vision" align with Board and Ministry priorities?
<p><i>Vision ...</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is our vision of our school for the next 6 months ... the next year? 2. Is this vision shared with our learning community? 	<p><i>Supports ...</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the strengths of our school that would support a sustained, intentional effort for character development? 2. What obstacles to character development need to be addressed in our school? 3. What do I need to learn? 4. How supportive/accepting will the stakeholders (administration, staff, students, community) be to intentional character development practices? 5. What financial, organizational, and/or resource support is available?

Adapted from the York Region District School Board's Character Matters.

School Engagement Process

- ❖ Refer to *On Common Ground* to establish a well-developed process.
- ❖ Give every student the opportunity to provide input on which character traits are important to him/her (e.g., a survey, grade forums).
- ❖ Ask School Council members for input on which character traits they would like to see included in the initiative (e.g., survey on the website, suggestion box, comments, e-mail to principal).
- ❖ Engage staff with the formation of a Character Education committee that can assist in choosing the traits and the implementation (Include students on the Character Education Committee.)
- ❖ Ensure there is a balance between moral and performance traits.

Lickona and Davidson (2005) define the distinction between moral and performance traits as follows:

*By **performance character**, we mean those strengths of character such as hard work, diligence, self-discipline, perseverance, and commitment to excellence-needed to develop one's talents, do one's best, and achieve one's goals in school and beyond.*

*By **moral character**, we mean those strengths of character-such as empathy, honesty, respect, justice, and service-needed to develop positive interpersonal relationships, contribute to community, and assume the responsibilities of democratic citizenship.*

Moral and Performance Character Traits in Action

Common Moral Character Traits are:

Respect, Honesty, Kindness, Citizenship, Inclusiveness and Fairness

Common Performance Character Traits are:

Responsibility, Perseverance, Initiative and Optimism

Character Education attributes align well with learning skills such as:

Independent Work	Responsibility, Perseverance, Initiative
Initiative	Responsibility, Initiative
Homework Completion	Responsibility, Perseverance
Use of Information	Initiative, Perseverance
Cooperation with Others	Optimism, Respect, Kindness, Citizenship, Inclusiveness, Fairness
Conflict Resolution	Optimism, Initiative, Perseverance, Responsibility, Respect, Fairness, Inclusiveness, Honesty
Class Participation	Initiative, Optimism, Responsibility, Respect, Honesty, Citizenship, Inclusiveness
Problem Solving	Perseverance, Initiative, Optimism
Goal Setting to Improve Work	Responsibility, Initiative, Optimism



IMPLEMENTATION

STAFF

- We have identified curriculum connections and are making them as explicit as possible in our daily teaching.
- We are engaged in staff modeling.
- We are using consistent language in and around the school.
- We are celebrating our successes in a meaningful way.
- We have referred to the document entitled *On Common Ground*.
- We are attempting to ensure there is a balance between moral and performance traits.

STUDENTS

- Our students are engaged in modeling the outlined character traits.
- Our students are using (beginning to use) consistent language.
- Our students are actively involved in our celebrations.

COMMUNITY

- Our community is engaged in modeling the outlined character traits.
- Our community is using (beginning to use) consistent language.
- Our community is actively involved in our celebrations.



4 Implementation

Real education is rooted in the telling and retelling of culturally formative stories which give meaning to ideas of honour, courage, justice, truth and love.

~John Patrick

Putting your plan into action includes two distinct layers: integration into the curriculum and behaviour management as a learning opportunity.

The **Classroom Resources** section within this Implementation stage of the manual provides strategies and examples for effective implementation within the classroom. There are multitude of ways to integrate Character Education learning into classroom activities. 'Teachable moments' will present themselves on a daily basis. Opportunities to refer to identified traits and put them into the context of daily living using common language established in the Identification stage will facilitate student growth and understanding.

Planning ahead using clear curriculum connections, clarifying the distinction between moral and performance traits, and employing strategies that promote critical thinking regarding important character traits are all important elements of classroom infusion.

The tools provided in the **Behavioural Interventions** section of this Implementation stage will guide you through responding in a positive pro-active manner to inappropriate or harmful student behaviour.

Despite the best curriculum planning and implementation, behavioural situations requiring intervention will still occur. Students will frequently deal with conflict situations in a 'knee jerk' manner and respond in ways that do not demonstrate positive character traits. These situations provide opportunities for modelling and learning. Walking a student through recognizing the impact of his/her actions on others can have a profound effect and facilitate an enhanced internalization of concepts.

Consistently referring to key concepts and having positive character trait information displayed prominently in classrooms and throughout the school will reinforce learning and modelling.

Embedding character trait development into your code of conduct by defining rights and responsibilities for each expectation will further reinforce the values you are promoting.

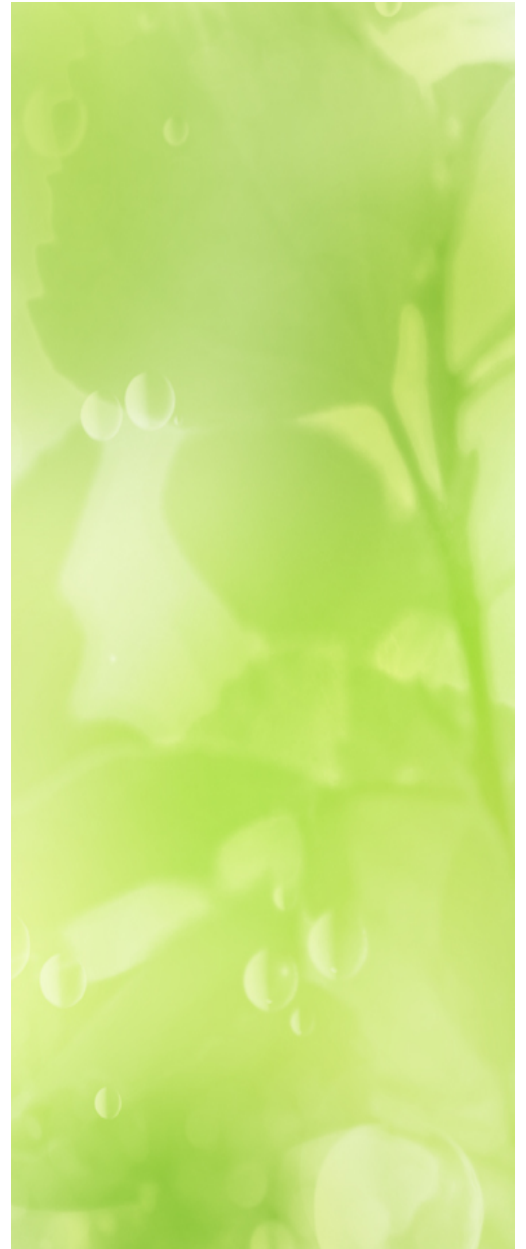
Key Components for Implementation

- ❖ Board-based consultation with a wide cross-section of the community that reflects its diversity
- ❖ A school-wide commitment to model, teach and expect demonstrations of the attributes in all school, classroom and extra-curricular activities
- ❖ The intentional infusion of the components of the Character Development Initiative into the policies, programs, practices and interactions within the school and board.
- ❖ The conditions necessary for student leadership development and opportunities for student voice in the educational process
- ❖ Opportunities for student civic engagement and community involvement that reflect the unique needs of their communities
- ❖ A culture which reflects the language and common understanding of character development
- ❖ Character development practices that are holistic in their intent and reflect the cognitive, affective and behavioural domains of learning
- ❖ A deliberate focus on character development in school plans with specific alignment with other ministry expectations: for example, Safe Schools, Student Success and other initiatives

~Finding Common Ground: Character Development in Ontario Schools: K-12, 2007.

The 7 E's of Teaching a Character Trait

1. Explain it - define it, illustrate it and discuss its importance.
2. Examine it - in literature, history and current events.
3. Exhibit it - through personal example.
4. Expect it - through codes, rules, contracts and consequences.
5. Experience it directly and provide opportunities for authentic experiences.
6. Encourage it - through goal setting, practice and self-assessment.
7. Evaluate it - discuss it and give feedback.



Classroom Resources

Integrating Character Education into the curriculum can be done in every subject. Some lend themselves more readily to concepts with direct connections; others will be more focused on implementing processes as opposed to information.

Enclosed within this sub-section are the following tools:

- ❖ A framework/guide to be used for planning purposes for embedding character development into core subject areas
- ❖ A framework/guide to be used for planning purposes for embedding character development into a Literacy program
- ❖ Generic reading questions for making connections to character development
- ❖ A framework/guide to be used for planning purposes for embedding character development into a 5-day Shared Reading Plan
- ❖ Character questions organized by Bloom's Taxonomy

√ Lists on the right-hand side of frameworks that are intended to be checklists

Framework for Embedding Character Development in Core Subjects

Subject Area and Overall Expectations

Unit / Activity / Lesson and Specific Expectations

Desired Outcome: Description of Culminating Activities Linked to Bloom’s Taxonomy

Character Development Connections: Character Traits Linked to Content of Activities and Bloom’s Taxonomy

Character Traits

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Honesty
- Kindness
- Courage
- Empathy
- Optimism
- Perseverance
- Inclusiveness
- Initiative

Methods & Strategies

- Independent
- Pairs
- Small Group
- Whole Group
- Cooperative
- Learning Centres
- Direct Instruction

Bloom’s Taxonomy

- Evaluation
- Synthesis
- Analysis
- Application
- Comprehension
- Knowledge

Culminating Activity

- Project
- Test
- Spreadsheet
- Oral
- Visual
- Graphic

Assessment

- Observation
- Checklist
- Notebook
- Check
- Participation
- Peer Evaluation
- Self-Evaluation
- Rubric
- Presentation
- Assignment
- CASI
- DRA
- PM Benchmarks
- Running Record

Integrated Strategies

- Science
- Social Studies
- Dance
- Drama
- Visual Arts
- Health & Physical Education
- French
- Technology
- History
- Geography
- Mathematics
- Music

Generic Reading Questions for Making Connections to Character Development

1. What character attribute(s) did a character in the story use to help him/her overcome a conflict/crisis/challenge?
2. Explain the meaning of that/those character trait(s).
3. Do you think this character would have been able to overcome the challenge without using that/those character trait(s)?
4. Can you think of another story (book, TV show or movie) in which a character uses that/those character trait(s) to overcome a challenge? Explain.
5. Can you think of a situation in your life for which you had to use that/those character trait(s) to overcome a challenge? Explain.
6. Think of a situation for which you might need to rely on that/those character trait(s) in your adult life. Explain.
7. Which character in the story would you choose for a friend? Explain with references to that person's character.

5-Day Shared Reading Plan

Text Title(s):				
Text Level Expectation	Text Level Expectation	Sentence Level Expectation	Word Level Expectation	Text Level Expectation
Character Focus: (looks / sounds / feels like)	Character Focus:			Character Focus:
Reading/Writing Response				
Text Connections (self, text, world, media):				
Teacher Reflection:				

School Character Traits

- Responsibility
- Respect
- Perseverance
- Inclusiveness
- Optimism
- Kindness
- Initiative
- Honesty
- Fairness
- Citizenship

Bloom's Taxonomy

- Evaluation
 - Synthesis
 - Analysis
 - Application
 - Comprehension
 - Knowledge
- (See Character Questions Organized by Bloom's Taxonomy)

Reading Strategies

- Schema
- Fix-Up Strategies
- Visualization
- Making Connections
- Predicting
- Inferring
- Summarizing
- Questioning
- Synthesis
- Text Features

Curriculum Connections

- Social Studies
- Geography
- Drama
- Visual Arts
- Health & Physical Education
- History
- Science
- French
- Dance

Character Questions Organized by Bloom's Taxonomy

Knowledge

1. Make a list of facts you learned from the story.
2. List the characters in the story and describe them.
3. List 5 new words about character that you learned while reading the story. Record their definitions.
4. List 10 words related to character from the story. Put them into a word search.
5. What problem does one of the characters in the story have and how does he/she solve it? What character attributes does he/she rely on to help with the solution?

Comprehension

1. Did anyone in the story do something you did not like? Explain what it was and why did you not like it.
2. What was the author's purpose in writing this story?
3. If you could continue this story, what events would you include?
4. How did the main character feel during the story? Give evidence of this.
5. Tell in your own words how the behaviour of the characters makes the story more interesting.

Application

1. Did this story remind you of anything that has happened to you? If so, what? Why?
2. Did this story give you any new ideas about your character or the character of someone you know? Explain.
3. How would one of the main characters in the story fit in with the students in your classroom if he/she visited for a week? If that character did not fit in, what, if anything, would you do to help him/her make friends?
4. If you were in a problem situation like the one in the story, how would you have acted and why? Be sure to tell what the situation is.
5. What lesson did you learn from the story? How will that lesson help you develop your character in the future?
6. Tell about a time something similar to what happened in the story happened to you or someone you know.

Analysis

1. Pick one of the main characters. Think of a shape that fits that person's traits. Draw the shape. Then describe the character inside the shape.
2. Tell 5 ways the main character is like you.
3. Find one character attribute that describes a character in the story very well. Give reasons for your choice.
4. In a paragraph, state the moral lesson of the story.
5. State how lack of good character caused a conflict in the story and how the influence of good character solved it. State how you would feel if you were part of that conflict.

Synthesis

1. Choose an interesting character from the story. Think of what his/her dislikes are and then think of a gift you would like to give him/her. Design a greeting card to go along with the gift in which you explain why you would give that gift.
2. Identify one problem in the story that was solved and give an alternate solution that you have used in the past.
3. Identify a character in the book and rewrite the story from his/her perspective. How does his/her perspective differ from yours?
4. What part of the story would you change? State why you would make the changes.
5. Design costumes for the characters that reflect their personalities. Design a costume for you based on your strongest character trait.

Evaluation

1. Think of the moral lessons of the story and explain why the author chose them.
2. If you could only save one character from the story in the event of a disaster, which one would it be and why?
3. Is the title of the story a good one or a poor one? Why?
4. Do you like the way the story ended? Why or why not?
5. Which character in the book would you choose for a friend? Explain with references to that person's character.
6. What do you think was the most interesting part of the story? Why?
7. Recount the most exciting part of the story and tell why you chose it.

Behavioural Interventions

Our deeds determine us, as much as we determine our deeds
~ George Eliot

Perhaps the greatest opportunities for student learning regarding Character Education come from the moments when mistakes are made and behaviour is not congruent with the positive Character Education traits that you have identified as important to your school community.

This learning can be facilitated together with disciplinary action, or more informally as a separate process, through individual or group discussions with students.

It is important that the language you use is consistent with Character Education principles; for this reason we focus on 'Restorative' language. The focus is not on attaching blame, but on assisting the student to recognize the impact of his/her actions on others and to identify steps s/he can take to repair any harm caused. Ultimately, the goal is that students learn from their experiences and develop personal goals that can be revisited to ensure that real learning has occurred.

This section includes:

- ❖ Ideas for consistently reinforcing the characteristics your school has chosen
- ❖ An explanation of the Restorative Approach based on 'MEND' © concepts
- ❖ Two models (Triangle of Interventions, Bubble Chart) that can be used as a framework for working through problem behaviors with students
- ❖ Ideas for embedding Character Education in your school Code of Conduct

Framework for Behaviour Intervention Models Using Character Education

Purpose: To provide a framework with consistent language and behaviours based on a Character Education program that will help students understand the impact of their actions and allow them to learn and grow from each experience.

Key Concepts:

- ❖ Display traits prominently in the school (posters in classrooms and hallways).
- ❖ Connect the traits to the school motto, mission and vision.
- ❖ Refer consistently to character traits during school programs and activities.
- ❖ Include the character-based initiative and program details in the school handbook, the code of behaviour, student planner, newsletter and on the school website.
- ❖ Support school staff in effectively modelling the character traits, teaching the character traits and using character-based decision-making in their classrooms and their extra-curricular activities.
- ❖ Provide sample professional development opportunities to support staff.
- ❖ Ensure school staff uses consistent language that encourages building strong character and making character-based decisions.
- ❖ Encourage all members of the school community to think about the impact of their actions, not just the intent of their actions.

Examples from across the district:

- ❖ Take care of yourself, Take care of each other, Take care of this place.
- ❖ ROCK (Respect, Optimism, Caring and Kindness)
- ❖ Hawks have character (perseverance, good judgment, courage, respect, integrity, self-discipline, responsibility and kindness).

Importance of Using Character Education Within the Intervention Model

Character Education provides a preventative, viable and proactive means of educating youth. Using Character Education as the basis for an intervention model allows educators to turn harmful behaviours and situations into teachable moments. The focus is on having students understand (and thereby internalize) the impact of their actions on others, themselves, the school and the community.

Character Education provides an opportunity to teach students lifelong traits and skills which will assist them in becoming socially responsible and caring members of the community.

Intervention Model

By using a similar approach to that of MEND (Mediating Ends Negative Disagreements), schools incorporate their motto/focused traits (related to Character Education) into the intervention process.

- ❖ Students involved in a situation are asked a series of questions, requiring that they reflect upon and thoroughly explain the impact their actions have had on all parties involved (themselves, others, school, community).
- ❖ Students are also asked to explain how their actions relate to the motto/Character Education traits of the school.
- ❖ By explaining their actions and the impact they have had on others, the students involved gain an understanding of the effect(s) of their actions and hopefully grow from their experience.
- ❖ During the process, the student's explanation is documented on a worksheet. This is a visual reference for the student and may be revisited if the student is involved in another situation within his/her educational career.

MEND: Mediating Ends Negative Disagreements of Mediating by Empowering With Nurturing Dialogue is a joint pilot project between the Youth Diversion Program (YDP) and the Limestone District School Board Education Centre. The intention is for this project to become a board-wide initiative.

MEND incorporates principles of Restorative Practice to resolve conflicts in a meaningful way. The focus is on facilitating student understanding of the impact of their actions on others and developing ideas to repair harm caused as opposed to attaching blame.

- ❖ Level 1 (or MENDING Conversations) uses structured questions to facilitate meaningful dialogue between students in conflict
- ❖ Level 2 (or MENDING Circles) is used for more complex conflict and involves individual meetings with protagonists to prepare them for a circle meeting that explores the same issues in more detail.

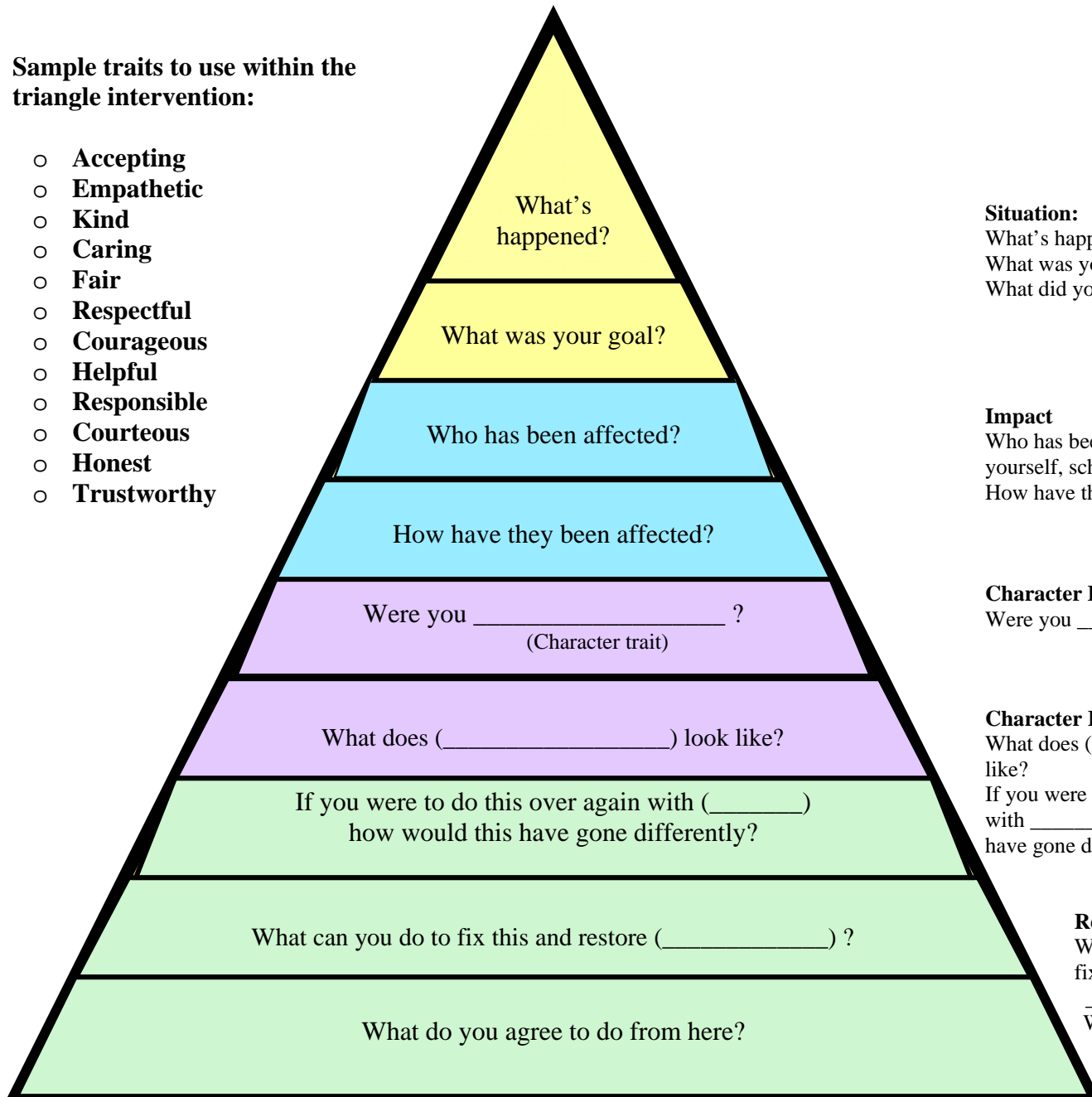
With this approach, staff and students at participating schools are trained to use consistent language and effectively resolve conflict.

Character Based Solution

Example: 1: Triangle of Interventions

Sample traits to use within the triangle intervention:

- **Accepting**
- **Empathetic**
- **Kind**
- **Caring**
- **Fair**
- **Respectful**
- **Courageous**
- **Helpful**
- **Responsible**
- **Courteous**
- **Honest**
- **Trustworthy**



Situation:

What's happened?
 What was your goal?
 What did you want to happen?

Impact

Who has been affected? (others, yourself, school, community)
 How have they been affected?

Character Filter

Were you _____ ?
 (Character trait)

Character Based Solution

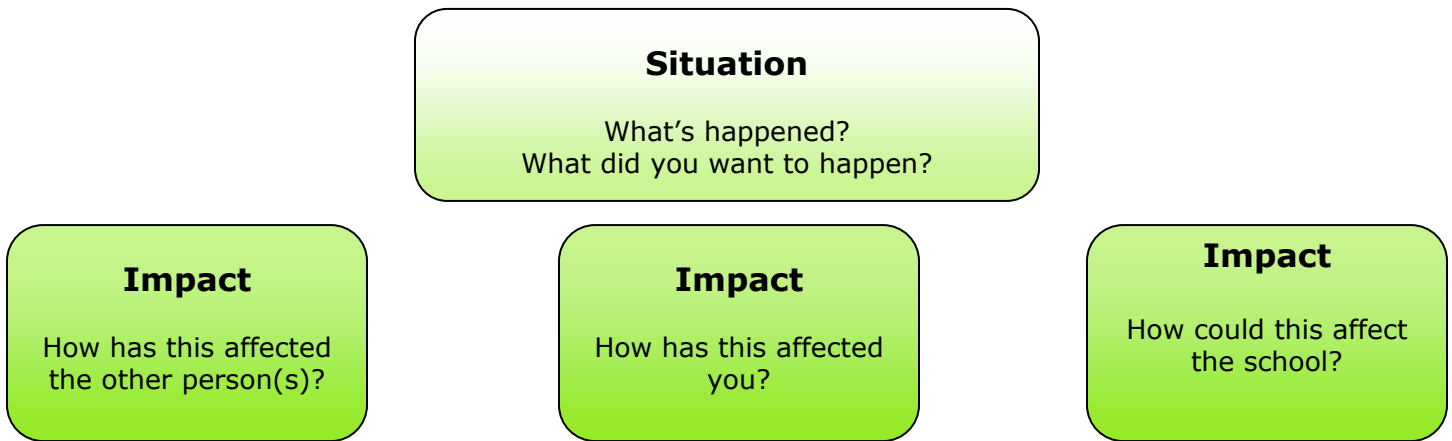
What does (character trait) look like?
 If you were to do this over again with _____ how would this have gone differently?

Restore/Solution

What can be done to fix and restore _____ ?
 What do you agree to do from here?

Example 2: Bubble Chart

Character Based Solution



Character Filter: What are the underlying character principles?
e.g. Were you being respectful or caring?

Character Based Solution:

- What does (character trait) look like?
- What does (character trait) sound like?
- What does (character trait) feel like?
- If you were being (character trait), how would this have gone differently?

What can you (we) do to fix this (or restore character trait)?

Sample traits to use within the intervention model:

- * Accepting
- * Empathetic
- * Kind
- * Caring
- * Fair
- * Respectful
- * Courageous
- * Helpful
- * Responsible
- * Courteous
- * Honest
- * Trustworthy

Adapted from the York Region District School Board Character Matters.

Code of Conduct and Character Education

Consistent language is the key to having students understand the importance of their actions. Therefore, families of schools are encouraged to examine one another's Codes of Conduct and work together during the revision process to ensure that individual school plans tie together. These codes need to focus on rights, responsibilities and expectations for everyone.

Example: Respect for Self and Others

- ❖ **Expectation:** Show courtesy and respect for yourself and others in the way you speak and behave at all times.
- ❖ **Right:** All individuals have the right to safety, dignity and respect.
- ❖ **Responsibility:** Take responsibility for your actions and commitments. Exercise self-discipline in language and conduct in and outside of school. Be a responsible member of the student community and outside the school.

Focus on the impact/harm that a behaviour had rather than on the inappropriateness of the behaviour (based on theory of mutual respect – incorporate MEND language/Character Based Solutions).

Example: What's happened?
 What did you want to happen?
 How has this affected you?
 How has this affected others?
 What does (character trait) look like?
 If you were being (character trait), how would this have gone differently?
 What could you do to fix this?

- ❖ Use positive language (focus on what is important to do versus what not to do).
- ❖ Reference to meeting the needs and rights of all individuals involved (everyone affected).
- ❖ Provide logical, educational and meaningful consequences. These can be articulated at the end of the code.
- ❖ Use education tools/activities that students can complete after receiving suspensions (relating to Character Education and student growth).
- ❖ Adhere to the Ontario Human Rights Code (AP 139) and the Education Act.



E V A L U A T I O N

STAFF

- We have re-evaluated our school community's situation using the tools we identified in the Identification stage.
- We have reported to all school community members.
- We continue to celebrate our successes.
- We have re-evaluated our plans and goals to ensure they continue to meet the needs of our school community.

STUDENTS

- Our students have provided us with feedback (through rubrics, surveys, student council, etc.) regarding the success of our Implementation.
- Our students have reflected upon their personal goals and have revised them to prepare for their future.
- Our students continue to be actively involved in our celebrations.

COMMUNITY

- Our community has provided us with feedback regarding the success of our Implementation.
- Our community has reflected upon our school goals and provided input where appropriate.
- Our community continues to be actively involved in our celebrations.



5 Evaluation

The final phase of Character Education infusion is an ongoing process that will loop back to Identification and onward in a continual flow.

Important areas of focus for developing your evaluation plan and ensuring that your Character Education program is dynamic and relevant to the unique needs of your school community are included in this section.

Comparing results achieved to baseline data gathered in the Identification phase will provide you with information that facilitates the further development and refinement of your Character Education program.

Evaluating student progress in an equitable manner can be facilitated through the use of carefully constructed rubrics that invite both staff and student evaluation of student progress (samples enclosed).

Providing clear, attainable goals for further development ensures that students can both celebrate their successes and strive for improvements.

Evaluation of the Character Development Initiative

Our character is what we do when we think no one is looking.
~H. Jackson Brown JR.

School improvement planning is about much more than just setting goals. It is about consistently and consciously working towards making our schools better at serving the needs of each of our students. To reach this goal, we need to build in procedures to measure how effectively we are achieving the goals we have set. Character Education is not something one implements in isolation and then checks off the list. Indeed, it should be at the core of all that we do within our schools and the ruler by which we measure our successes.

Schools represent the world in miniature as they mirror the larger society. They are places that can demonstrate the power of diversity to enrich communities and strengthen our Canadian identity. At their best, they represent democracy in action. At the same time, with diversity comes the need to find common ground in order to build consensus on the values we hold in common (*Finding Common Ground: Character Development in Ontario Schools K-12*, 2007).

It is vital to recognize that our communities are constantly changing; as such, we need to continually be engaging them as we develop Character Education strategies.

In evaluating Character Education initiatives, school performance is demonstrated by:

- ❖ Improving the academic achievement for all students.
- ❖ Establishing the boundaries and expectations for strong and healthy relationships.
- ❖ Ensuring that our schools are, as well as perceived to be, safe and orderly.
- ❖ Creating proactive and restorative programs to reduce behavioural problems.
- ❖ Focusing on what our students require for lifelong success and learning.
- ❖ Understanding and delivering improved employability skills.
- ❖ Building positive school cultures.
- ❖ Expecting responsible citizenship in classrooms, schools and communities.

Evaluating Your Efforts

See It!

Think It!

Do It!

Evaluate It!

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT RUBRIC

Character Trait	4 = Always	3 = Usually	2 = Sometimes	1 = Rarely	Level
Respect	The Student - demonstrates empathy and kindness towards others - appreciates diversity - follows classroom and school rules - takes care of classroom and school environment				4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1
Responsibility	The Student - demonstrates self-control and self-management - handles frustration appropriately - takes responsibility for personal actions - acts as a responsible citizen				4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1
Perseverance	The Student - attempts alternate strategies when a solution to a challenge fails - demonstrates desire to work towards a goal - works hard without giving up - encourages others in a group to persevere				4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1
Inclusiveness	The Student - includes others willingly - accepts working with different people - shows appreciation for the diversity of others - works willingly with others for a common purpose				4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1
Optimism	The Student - demonstrates adaptability and versatility when faced with change - develops personal and groups goals - demonstrates positive attitude about, and trust, in one's self and others - demonstrates resilience (bounces back from failure) and initiative				4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1

Learning Skills Rubric

	Category	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Works Independently	Begins activities	I always begin activities when I'm asked	I usually begin activities when I'm asked	I occasionally begin activities when I'm asked	I rarely begin activities when I'm asked
	Works continuously to complete classroom assignments	I always work continuously	I usually work continuously	I occasionally work continuously	I rarely work continuously
	Works without disrupting others	I always work without disrupting others	I usually work without disrupting others	I occasionally work without disrupting others	I rarely work without disrupting others
Teamwork	Actively listens to ideas of others	I always listen to others	I usually listen to others	I occasionally listen to others	I rarely listen to others
	Positively reacts to ideas of others	I always react positively to the ideas of others	I usually react positively to the ideas of others	I occasionally react positively to the ideas of others	I rarely react positively to the ideas of others
	Shares ideas	I always share ideas and resources to achieve group goals	I usually share ideas and resources to achieve group goals	I occasionally share ideas and resources to achieve group goals	I rarely share ideas and resources to achieve group goals
	Carries out group activity responsibilities	I always carry out group activity responsibilities	I usually carry out group activity responsibilities	I occasionally carry out group activity responsibilities	I rarely carry out group activity responsibilities
	Supports the contributions of others	I always encourage and support the positive contributions of others	I usually encourage and support the positive contributions of others	I occasionally encourage and support the positive contributions of others	I rarely encourage and support the positive contributions of others
	Shows knowledge and respect for classroom safety	I always show knowledge and respect for classroom safety	I usually show knowledge and respect for classroom safety	I occasionally show knowledge and respect for classroom safety	I rarely show knowledge and respect for classroom safety
Organization	Comes to class prepared to work	I always come to class prepared to work (pen/pencil, calculator, binder, books...)	I usually come to class prepared to work (pen/pencil, calculator, binder, books...)	I occasionally come to class prepared to work (pen/pencil, calculator, binder, books...)	I rarely come to class prepared to work (pen/pencil, calculator, binder, books...)
	On time	I am always on time for class	I am usually on time for class	I am occasionally on time for class	I am rarely on time for class
	Aware of upcoming dates for assignments and tests	I am always aware of upcoming dates for assignments and tests	I am usually aware of upcoming dates for assignments and tests	I am occasionally aware of upcoming dates for assignments and tests	I am rarely aware of upcoming dates for assignments and tests
	Work/handouts are dated, numbered, organized, and inside binder	I always have my notes/handouts dated, numbered, organized, and inside my binder	I usually have my notes/handouts dated, numbered, organized, and inside my binder	I occasionally have my notes/handouts dated, numbered, organized, and inside my binder	I rarely have my notes/handouts dated, numbered, organized, and inside my binder
Work Habits	Submits assignments on time	I always submit assignments on time	I usually submit assignments on time	I occasionally submit assignments on time	I rarely submit assignments on time
	Completes homework	I always complete homework	I usually complete homework	I occasionally complete homework	I rarely complete homework
	Uses class time	I always use class time to do my work	I usually use class time to do my work	I occasionally use class time to do my work	I rarely use class time to do my work
	Puts forth a consistent effort	I always put forth a consistent effort in class	I usually put forth a consistent effort in class	I occasionally put forth a consistent effort in class	I rarely put forth a consistent effort in class
Initiative	Communicates academic needs (help, enrichment)	I always communicate my academic needs	I usually communicate my academic needs	I occasionally communicate my academic needs	I rarely communicate my academic needs
	Looks for opportunities to learn more	I always look for opportunities to learn more	I usually look for opportunities to learn more	I occasionally look for opportunities to learn more	I rarely look for opportunities to learn more
	Offers ideas in class	I always offer my ideas in class	I usually offer my ideas in class	I occasionally offer my ideas in class	I rarely offer my ideas in class
	Shows positive energy for learning	I always show positive energy for learning	I usually show positive energy for learning	I occasionally show positive energy for learning	I rarely show positive energy for learning

Learning Skills Rubric

Name: _____

Course: _____

	Category	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Works Independently	I begin work/activities quickly when asked.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
	I work without stopping to finish activities.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
	I work without talking to or bothering others.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
Teamwork	I show interest in the ideas of others.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
	I show respect for classroom materials and safety rules.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
	I take responsibility for my share of group work.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
Organization	I bring the supplies I need to class.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
	I am on time for class.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
	My work and handouts are organized.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
Work Habits	I use class time to do my work.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
	I finish homework and hand in assignments on time.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
	I show my best effort every day.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
Initiative	When I need help, I ask for it.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
	In class I put my hand up to offer ideas.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
	I show that I want to learn.	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely

Legend:

Check 1: _____

Check 2: _____

Check 3: _____

For each check, select one of the category descriptions to focus on.

Example- Check 1: Over the next few weeks, I will hand in all my assignments on time.

Check 1: Over the next few weeks, I will _____

References

Lickona, T. & Davidson, M. (2005). *Smart & Good High Schools: Integrating Excellence and Ethics for Success in School, Work, and Beyond*. Cortland, NY: Center for the 4th and 5th Rs and Character Education Partnership.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2006). *Finding Common Ground: Character Development in Ontario Schools, K-12*. Toronto: Author.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2007). *Finding Common Ground: Character Development in Ontario Schools, K-12*. Toronto: Author.

York Region District School Board. *Character Matters*. www.charactermatters.ca.